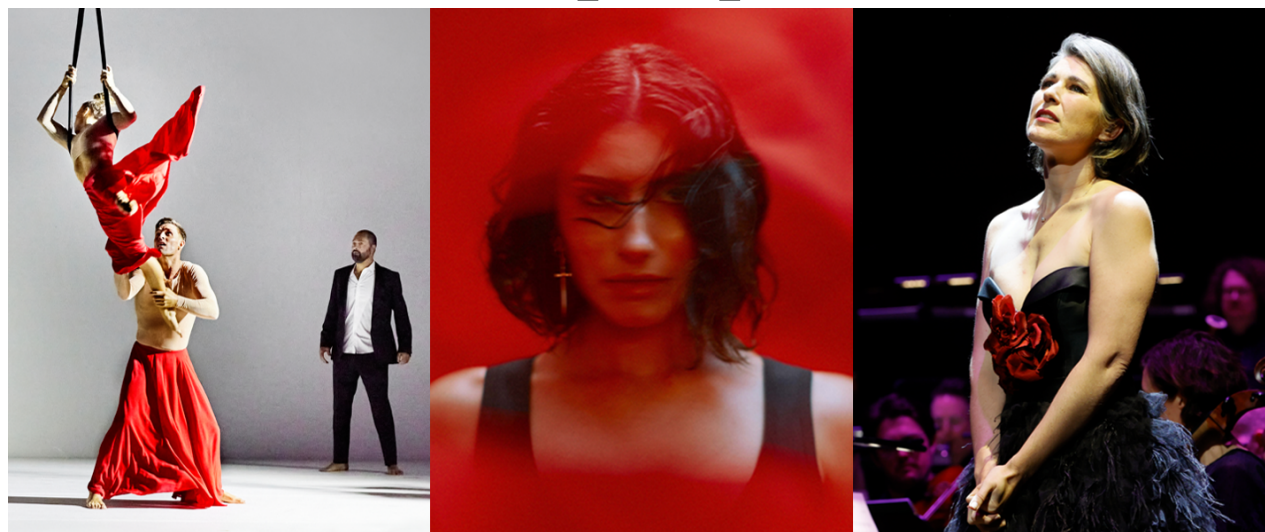


MEDIA RELEASE

17 September 2024

Opera Australia returns to the theatre with three Melbourne opera premieres in 2025



Opera Australia (OA) today announced its 2025 program that will include three Melbourne premieres and mark the Company's operatic debut in the Regent Theatre.

The 2025 Melbourne program sees OA's return to a traditional theatre setting to present three fully staged yet diverse operas that includes a brand-new production of Bizet's *Carmen* directed by Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC) Artistic Director Anne-Louise Sarks, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, and Gluck's *Orpheus & Eurydice*. Additionally, building on the success of this year's Puccini Gala, audiences will be treated to a similarly staged Verdi Gala in Hamer Hall featuring Nicole Car and Étienne Dupuis.

OA's CEO Fiona Allan thanked former Artistic Director Jo Davies for her dedication and hard work in delivering the program before her departure.

"We're very excited about the 2025 season, it demonstrates the Company's commitment to increasing opportunities for Australian artists both on and off the stage and ensuring the relevance of our artform for today's audiences. We're also very much looking forward to welcoming everyone to our new temporary home, the Regent Theatre," Ms Allan said.

Opera Australia's Head of Music Tahu Matheson worked closely with Ms Davies to create the 2025 season.

"The Melbourne season brims with appeal. From one of the most brilliantly witty productions of *Barber of Seville*, to a *Carmen* - fresh new and rethought - to Gluck's *Orpheus & Eurydice* in an incarnation spectacular and unequivocally unique, the season will be fascinating.

"We'll be running the operas in Stagione this season, which means performing on consecutive nights, so all the major roles will be double cast and the line-up is really exceptional," said Mr Matheson.

The highlight of the season will be the premiere of a new production of Bizet's *Carmen* by MTC Artistic Director Anne-Louise Sarks and starring internationally acclaimed soprano Danielle de Niese, returning to her hometown to perform for the first time in seven years.

"Creating a new production of *Carmen* is a thrilling prospect for me. *Carmen* was groundbreaking when it premiered and I am excited to capture that revolutionary spirit in our bold new production. This story is a classic for good reason. The need for love and connection is timeless. And its examination of desire and division - via class and sexuality and power - is all too relevant today. Opera is an incredibly powerful way to tell stories, and I am so excited to get started," said Ms Sarks.

OA continues its commitment to meaningful collaborations with other Australian performing arts companies, which includes presenting Opera Queensland's production *Orpheus & Eurydice* in association with Circa, where awe-inspiring acrobatics meet Gluck's exquisite music, and starring Australian soprano Samantha Clark and British countertenor Iestyn Davies.

PATRON-IN-CHIEF
DR HARUHISA HANDA



HERO PARTNERS



GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Those who attended the sell-out Puccini Gala at Hamer Hall this year will attest to the brilliance of Nicole Car and OA is proud to announce her return to Melbourne along with her husband, French-Canadian baritone Étienne Dupuis to star in next year's Verdi Gala. Celebrating one of the most influential and beloved composers, Giuseppe Verdi has given the world three of the most popular and glorious operas in the canon, *Aida*, *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*. It will be a show not to be missed.

For musical lovers, the Tony and Grammy Award-winning smash hit *Hadestown* will have its Melbourne premiere at Her Majesty's Theatre in May. Taking Broadway and the West End by storm, winning eight Tony Awards including Best Musical and described by the Guardian UK as "Big, beautiful and emotionally blasting," *Hadestown* has now been seen by three million people and streamed by more than 350 million.

OA is pleased to announce its free, outdoor concert BMW Opera for All will return for a third year to Fed Square providing opera lovers, and those curious to experience opera, an opportunity to attend a live performance.

Melbourne Spring 2025

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE - Rossini | Conductor Tahu Matheson | Director Elijah Moshinsky

Opera Australia debuts at the Regent Theatre with Elijah Moshinsky's sparkling production of *The Barber of Seville* by Rossini. An all-Australian cast will meet in Melbourne, returning from all corners of the globe. They include baritones Samuel Dale Johnson and Samuel Dundas to share the role of mischievous barber, Figaro, mezzo sopranos Helen Sherman and Emily Edmonds who will share the role of Rosina and Australian tenors John Longmuir and Shanul Sharma to share the role of Count Almaviva. A laugh-out-loud comedy, this opera overflows with as many famous tunes as you can fit into two-and-a-half hours. **Regent Theatre, 31 October – 5 November**

CARMEN - Bizet: | Conductor Clelia Cafiero | Director Anne-Louise Sarks

One of Australia's great theatre directors, MTC's Anne-Louise Sarks will make her directorial debut of a fully staged opera, with a brand-new production of *Carmen*. A bold offering from Sarks will lean into the revolutionary heart of Bizet's once groundbreaking opera, asking urgent questions about opera's iconic femme fatale, whose dance with destiny ends in disaster. Making her Opera Australia debut is Italian conductor Clelia Cafiero who will lead a smoldering cast of homegrown and international talent, bringing fiery vibrancy to a *Carmen* for our time. Starring Melbourne-born star Danielle de Niese returning for the first time in seven years, along with OA favourites Sian Sharp, Jennifer Black and Diego Torre who will share the role of Don Jose with Mexican tenor Abraham Bretón. **Regent Theatre, 15 – 25 November**

ORPHEUS & EURYDICE - Gluck | Conductor Dane Lam | Director Yaron Lifschitz

Breathtaking acrobatics from Circa's trailblazing ensemble and superb vocal performances will unite on stage for the Melbourne premiere of *Orpheus & Eurydice* at the Regent Theatre. This genre-busting Opera Queensland production by Circa Artistic Director Yaron Lifschitz, delves into the profound intersection between love and death in a visually mesmerising and musically astounding spectacle. British countertenor Iestyn Davies will captivate audiences in his Opera Australia debut as Orfeo alongside Australian soprano Samantha Clarke as Eurydice and Amor in Gluck's heart-wrenching opera. Presented in association with Circa. **Regent Theatre, 2 – 5 December**

In Concert

VERDI GALA

World-leading soprano Nicole Car returns, with her husband, distinguished baritone Étienne Dupuis, to lead the cast in the *Verdi Gala Concert* at Hamer Hall. One of the greatest opera composers the world has ever known, Giuseppe Verdi's magnificent works continue to be some of the most performed around the world, including *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto* and *Aida*. Two Melbourne-exclusive concerts will perform a glorious selection of Verdi's great masterpieces, widely recognised for their big, beautiful melodies and expressive, dramatic orchestrations. **Hamer Hall, 30 April + 3 May**

BMW Opera For All | Conductor Brian Castles-Onion

A free, open-air concert in the beating heart of Melbourne's CBD, the annual *BMW Opera for All* global concert series returns to Fed Square. Beginning at 6pm for an evening of musical bliss, Opera Australia and Orchestra Victoria will treat audiences to a selection of the world's most popular arias, easily recognised by opera lovers and newcomers alike. Led by the ever-entertaining Brian Castles-Onion AM this is an opportunity for everyone to experience the magic of opera. **Fed Square, 1 February**

Musical**HADESTOWN - Mitchell:** | Director **Rachel Chavkin**

Winner of eight Tony Awards, including Best Score, and the Grammy Award for Best Musical Theatre Album, the acclaimed West End and Broadway musical phenomenon *Hadestown* will make its Australian premiere. Singer-songwriter Anaïs Mitchell's genre-defying, defiantly hopeful musical blends modern American folk music with New Orleans-inspired jazz to reimagine the ancient tale of Orpheus and Eurydice, performed by a vibrant ensemble of actors, singers, musicians and dancers. **Her Majesty's Theatre, from 8 May**

National Tour 2025**LA BOHÈME - Puccini** | Director **Dean Bryant**

A fresh new take on one of the world's favourite operas *La Bohème* captures the vibrant spirit of the 70s. Award-winning director Dean Bryant brings his trademark wit and vivacity to this new staging, with set and costume designer Isabel Hudson and lighting designer Damien Cooper. Known for drawing on emotions that only music can express, this bohemian love story will touch hearts across Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory on Opera Australia's annual national Tour. Various locations around Australia **7 July – 14 September**

Booking Information

Subscriptions available now. Prices start at \$134 for two operas.

Opera Australia Box Office | 03 9685 3700

Explore the season with our digital brochure opera.org.au/events/season-2025

Single tickets on sale from 29 October 2024

www.opera.org.au

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